

Management Initiatives



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Homeland Security

The events of September 11, 2001, caused GIPSA, along with the rest of USDA, to step up efforts to ensure the security of America's food supply. GIPSA inspectors remain on a heightened state of alert at seaports, inland grain terminals, stockyards, and meat processing plants. We have increased security at all GIPSA facilities and work sites. And, we are coordinating with other Federal agencies, such as the Food and Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Customs, and law enforcement entities, on biosecurity issues. During FY 2002, GIPSA undertook the following homeland security initiatives:

GIPSA Facility and Workplace Security

- **Security Analyses.** In the initial wake of the September 11th tragedies, GIPSA focused on ensuring the security of its facilities and people, and strengthening its emergency preparedness and response systems. Managers at all GIPSA field locations performed comprehensive "security gap analyses" and took any needed corrective actions to enhance workplace security.
- **Site Visits.** To better assess the Agency's homeland security posture, GIPSA safety and health personnel visited seven key GIPSA regional and field offices, and the Agency's Technical Center in Kansas City. These visits (1) identified and addressed local office security problems, and (2) allowed direct communication with employees about GIPSA and USDA initiatives to improve the security of USDA facilities and work sites.
- **Mail Handling Guidelines.** In response to the Anthrax scare, GIPSA issued Agency-wide mail-handling guidelines that were based on a Center for Disease Control Health Advisory and procedures published by the U.S. Postal Service. In addition, at the Agency's largest laboratory, rooms handling incoming and outgoing mail were physically separated and contained. GIPSA also made personal protective equipment (i.e., gloves and masks) available for use by all GIPSA employees who handle incoming mail.

Emergency Preparedness

- **Emergency Preparations and Response Guide.** To better prepare GIPSA offices for natural and man-made disasters, GIPSA developed an Emergency Preparedness and Response Guide that provides GIPSA offices with basic information on preparing for disasters and responding to a wide range of emergencies, including terrorist threats.

- **Emergency Action Plan.** Last year, GIPSA developed a plan for oversight and recovery efforts, and to ensure continuity of service in the event of a major emergency at a field location.
- **Headquarters Evacuation Plans.** In direct response to the events of September 11, GIPSA developed office-specific evacuation procedures that identify the office's chain of command, establish an office head-count protocol, and identify an evacuation route and meeting point for office employees.
- **Emergency Notification Policies and Procedures.** September 11 taught us that complex emergency reaction plans often don't work in a real emergency. For this reason, GIPSA drastically simplified the Agency's emergency notification procedures to allow faster and more direct communication with key personnel.
- **COOP and CAT.** GIPSA continues to work closely with the USDA Office of Crisis Planning and Management (OCPM) to refine the Department's and GIPSA's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and to support/staff the Department's Crisis Action Team (CAT). GIPSA's COOP and CAT team members have participated in a number of disaster-related exercises and training sessions in the past year.

Training and Educational Initiatives

- **Biosecurity Awareness.** Processed grain products, animal feed, livestock, poultry, and hogs -- products that GIPSA employees deal with on a daily basis -- all are potential vectors for intentional contamination that could injure humans and animals. To strengthen overall security plans, better protect our employees and customers, and promote biosecurity awareness, GIPSA developed and instituted a biosecurity training program.

Homeland Security Outreach

- GIPSA's Safety and Health Manager outlined USDA's homeland security and biosecurity program at the American Institute of Baking's (AIB) "Food Security Conference." AIB is a non-profit corporation that works closely with local grain science and trade organizations, and maintains working relationships with many other food production and equipment, food safety, trade development, and food legislation groups and university food science research programs both in the United States and abroad.
- GIPSA helped the National Food Processors Association, Grain Elevator and Processing Society (GEAPS), National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA), and other industry groups on a number of homeland security/food security initiatives. For example, GIPSA provided input into the NGFA paper "Agribusiness Facility and Operations Security," and provided information to GEAPS and NGFA about the National Infrastructure Protection Center's Information Sharing Program.

Civil Rights

GIPSA continues to incorporate the Secretary's Civil Rights goals and objectives into the Agency's daily operations. The Agency has implemented and trained all managers on a Civil Rights Strategic Plan. Our goal is to strive for fairness, acceptance, inclusion, and respect in relationships with our co-workers and customers.

Outreach. GIPSA has removed perceived barriers to its programs by significantly increasing its outreach efforts to assist disadvantaged and underserved customers. This includes new activities: support for the Beginning Agricultural Youth Opportunity Unlimited (BAYOU) at Southern University and A&M College, and Pregraduate Training of Young Minorities for Leadership Roles in Agriculture at Southern Arkansas University, and increased funding for Title IX educational activities. The Agency has also increased outreach initiatives to provide excess property (computers, laboratory equipment, etc.) to local high schools, HACU, and Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.

Recruitment. GIPSA has acted to address the President's Initiative to hire more employees with disabilities. Working with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, GIPSA is expanding the area of consideration of job announcements to target more applicants with disabilities. GIPSA also participated with other USDA agencies at career fairs and conferences to increase the level of employment for persons with disabilities.

GIPSA hires minority interns on a regular basis to increase awareness of Federal employment opportunities among minorities. This is a long-term program to address workforce diversity issues in the future. In FY 2002, GIPSA hired 18 interns from a variety of programs (e.g., WINS, Center of Excellence, Regulatory Science, and 1890 programs).

EEO Dispute Resolution. In FY 2002, using mediation and alternate dispute resolution, GIPSA successfully resolved 28 percent of all informal complaints. The Agency continues to work with employees and managers to reach early resolutions in the pre-complaint process.

Explosion Data

GIPSA receives information on agricultural dust explosions through the cooperation of Dr. Robert Schoeff, Professor Emeritus, Kansas State University; Mavis Rogers, GIPSA; and a news clipping service. GIPSA does not investigate agricultural dust explosions and the private sector is not required to report explosions to GIPSA. This data is subject to change as new information becomes available.

Summary of Reported Grain Dust Explosions FY 1997-2002

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Number of Explosions	14	18	11	9	8	7
Number of Injuries	8	21	15	19	7	8
Number of Deaths	1	7	0	1	1	1

Summary of Reported Agricultural Dust Explosions FY 2002

Facility	Location	Date	Injuries	Fatality
Farmers Coop	Woolstock, IA	09/09/02	3	0
ADM/CountryMark, LLC	Clymers, IN	08/08/02	0	0
Mill Rite Farms	Millersburg, OR	08/08/02	3	1
Graham Grain Company	Shelburn, IN	06/03/02	1	0
Farmers' Coop Assn.	Hanover, KS	04/18/02	0	0
Harvest Land Cooperative	Springfield, MN	04/13/02	1	0
Graham Grain Company	Terre Haute, IN	12/27/01	0	0